

**MASS COMMUNICATION SPECIALIST 1ST CLASS (SW/AW)**  
**ALAN J. GRAGG**  
**UNITED STATES NAVY**

Petty Officer 1st Class Alan J. Gragg was born and raised in Missoula, Mont., where he attended public school from grades K-12. After graduating from Hellgate High School in 2005, he enlisted in October that year as a journalist (JO) in the U.S. Navy.

After basic training at Great Lakes, Ill., he attended journalist “A” school at the Defense Information School (DINFOS) located at Fort Meade, Md. There, he completed the Basic Public Affairs Specialist-Writer (BPAS-W) and Basic Public Affairs Specialist-Broadcaster (BPAS-B) training courses from December 2005-June 2006. After graduating from DINFOS as a Journalist Seaman Recruit, his rating and other media-related specialties merged into the current Mass Communication Specialist (MC) designation. In July 2006, he advanced to the rank of Seaman Apprentice.

His first duty assignment was as a broadcaster at Naval Media Center Fleet Support Detachment Bahrain from September 2006 to October 2007. In March 2007, he advanced in rank from Seaman Apprentice to Seaman. There, he received his first Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (NAM) for his role hosting the first live broadcasts on Bahrain’s 106.3 “The Heat” radio show.



Following his overseas tour, he transferred to U.S. Naval Forces Southern Command/U.S. 4th Fleet headquarters in Mayport, Fla., where he served as a member of the public affairs staff. In November 2007, he was promoted from Seaman to Petty Officer 3rd Class. Then, in October 2008, he received his first Good Conduct Medal for three consecutive years of good conduct service. A month later, he was promoted to Petty Officer 2nd Class.

In October 2009, he received his second NAM for his contributions to the command’s public affairs staff. That month, he also re-enlisted for three years and transferred to DINFOS for advanced “C” school training. He completed the Video Production & Documentation (VPD) course in March 2010 and moved on to his next assignment at Navy Public Affairs Support Element (NPASE) West in San Diego, Calif.

As a member of the NPASE team, he deployed for the first time aboard the aircraft carrier USS Abraham Lincoln (CVN 72) in September 2010. He was soon chosen to lead the ship’s Media Department staff as the editor for “The Penny Press” newspaper. In January 2011, he was selected as the NPASE Junior Sailor of the Year for 2010 and received his third NAM. In March that year, he earned his Enlisted Surface Warfare Specialist qualification and returned home from deployment. He was presented with a Chief of Information Merit Award certificate for his role as editor of The Penny Press, which was chosen as the Navy’s best tabloid-format newspaper for 2010.

He received his second Good Conduct Medal before deploying again with NPASE in November 2011, aboard the Navy’s newest amphibious assault ship USS Makin Island (LHD 8). During the ship’s maiden deployment, he served as NPASE Sea Operational Detachment Leading Petty Officer. In April 2012, he was selected to attend the Advanced Visual Journalism program at Syracuse University. He earned his Enlisted Aviation Warfare Specialist qualification and his fourth NAM before returning from deployment in May 2012.

Back in San Diego, he re-enlisted again for four years and transferred to Syracuse, N.Y., where he currently attends the Military Motion Media program at Syracuse University. In November 2012, he was promoted to Petty Officer 1st Class. His follow-on assignment will be as an instructor in the broadcasting department at DINFOS.

His awards include the Navy and Marine Corps Achievement Medal (four awards), Navy Good Conduct Medal (two awards), Global War on Terrorism Expeditionary Medal, Global War on Terrorism Service Medal, National Defense Medal, Sea Service Deployment Ribbon (two awards), and the Overseas Service Ribbon.